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Rhonda Parker
Development & Communications Manager
(313) 446-4444 ext. 5819
(313) 680-1155
parkerr@daaa1a.org

Detroit Area Agency on Aging

Statement on Budget Blueprint

Meals on Wheels...More than just a Meal it's an Investment

Detroit, Michigan (March 17, 2017) – Detroit Area Agency on Aging (DAAA), a nonprofit organization with a mission to educate, advocate, and promote healthy aging, provides approximately 2500 meals daily primarily to homebound seniors, 60 years of age or older and disabled adults in Detroit, Harper Woods, Hamtramck, the five Grosse Pointes and Highland Park.

Yesterday, the President sent his Budget Blueprint, also referred to as the “skinny budget” to Congress with a plan to release further details in the coming months. This blueprint focuses on discretionary spending levels for fiscal year 2018, and makes investments in defense programs, paid for by deep cuts to non-defense discretionary (NDD) programs, such as Meals on Wheels.

Portions of the President’s Budget that have been released so far call for the elimination of a number of federal programs, including the Community Services Block Grant (CSBG) and Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), on which some Meals on Wheels programs rely to deliver nutritious meals, safety checks and friendly visits to our nation’s most vulnerable seniors.

Details on our network’s primary source of funding, the Older Americans Act, which has supported senior nutrition programs for 45 years, not yet been released. Therefore, currently we cannot say what the impact will actually be at this time.

What we can say is that based on the research there are many benefits to the Meals on Wheels program such as:

- *Food Security – seniors know they will get a hot nutritious meal
- *Prevents Isolation and anxiety
- *Serves as safety check for our most vulnerable population
- *Reduces medical cost such as hospitalization and reoccurring hospitalization
- *Provides a nutritional value and improves the quality of life
- *Enables at-risk seniors to stay out of more expensive healthcare settings and remain more healthy, safe and independent in their own homes, where they want to be.
- *Without support from programs like Meals on Wheels, millions of seniors are forced to prematurely trade their homes for nursing facilities.
- *Saves us all billions of dollars in unnecessary Medicaid and Medicare expenses every year – tax dollars that can be spent in much better ways.
- *We can provide a senior with Meals on Wheels for an entire year for roughly the same cost of an average one-day stay in the hospital or ten days in a nursing home.

The reality is that more than 10 million seniors in America struggle with hunger, 15.2 million live in isolation and 18.4 million live at or below poverty level. This problem will only become more serious as the senior population is projected to double by 2050. Any cuts to this program will be detrimental to our aging population.

About Detroit Area Agency on Aging

DAAA is a private, non-profit agency that serves older persons age 60 years and over, adults with disabilities and caregivers in the City of Detroit, the five Grosse Pointes, Hamtramck, Harper Woods and Highland Park. DAAA serves over 136,000 older adults age 60 and older and caregivers annually.

For more information, please call (313) 446-4444 or visit www.DetroitSeniorSolution.org.

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